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Junior colleges claim the virtue of good teaching as shown by their emphasis on instruction rather than on research and by their interest in accrediting agencies, whose prime concern is the improvement of teaching. Faculty ratings by students have stimulated self-improvement where the criticisms, both positive and negative have been seriously considered. Students' ratings tend to favor teachers coming directly from graduate school and with some background in professional education. Retired military personnel do as well as others in general junior college teaching and usually better in science and mathematics. Attendance at graduate school, rather than reliance on military rank, enhances their status as applicants for teaching positions. Classroom observation, student accomplishments, student ratings, and followup studies of graduates teachers also stress the importance of good supervision and departmental leadership. They believe that attendance at in-service workshops and at local and national meetings, reduced teaching loads, and better guidance programs would improve their teaching. (HH)

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RESEARCH ON JUNIOR COLLEGE TEACHERS

Historically, junior colleges have claimed to be "teaching" institutions. Much has been written about the instructional superiority in the two-year college, and these institutions are vitally interested in the improvement of teaching. This is evident by the fact that junior colleges continue to seek membership in accrediting agencies whose prime consideration is the improvement of instruction. In addition, junior college administrators in California have listed instructional improvement as the number-one priority item on their list of needs (JC 660 248). For this issue of *Junior College Research Review* fifteen studies that were designed to improve instruction in the junior college were considered.

Review

St. Johns River Junior College has completed research on student ratings of faculty (JC 670 448). Faculty rating at St. Johns yields data for establishing criteria for faculty selection and improvement, for further faculty studies and evaluation, and for establishing a base for all contractual considerations, including merit pay. By ballot, 80 percent of the faculty voted for student participation in faculty rating for all purposes, including merit pay.

With the help of the Academic Affairs Committee, procedures were set up whereby every student would rate each of his current instructors on four counts: (1) positive personal traits, (2) scholarship, (3) skill of presentation, and (4) accuracy in evaluating students. Provision was made to allow the students to supplement the ratings with written comments. All written comments were typed before they were forwarded to the teacher.

Comparisons were made between the scores achieved by the full-time teaching faculty during the successive years 1964-65 and 1965-66. Fourteen of the fifty instructors rated the first year did not return in the fall of 1965. Ten of these were in the lower half of the ratings, reducing the spread of returning faculty by nearly one-third. Fifteen who were in the lower half did return. All but one of the fifteen improved on the next rating. Interviews with the faculty members who made significant improvement revealed that without exception they took seriously the findings of the ratings, especially the students' comments.

Comparison of divisional ratings resulted in competition based on pride. All but two of the seven divisions changed position in the rank order. Only two divisions failed to improve their point ratings, and these were led by new division heads who did not have the experience of the previous year's comparison.

The following additional results were found:

1. Instructors awarding higher marks could not thereby expect a higher rating by their students.
2. Honor students tended to rate the "high" instructors higher and the "low" ones lower than did the total student population.
3. Few if any differences favored instructors of nine o'clock classes, a preferred hour, over instructors of one o'clock classes.
4. After four years of faculty rating, the faculty coming directly from graduate schools ranked higher than faculty from any other source; faculty from high schools ranked next.
5. Professional education preparation appeared to result in a slightly higher rating.

It was observed that students tended to equate exacting instruction with excellence; students preferred faculty who communicated definite objectives and classes where their status was certain at all times. There was no distinct student concern for the type of instructional method used. The study points out the delicateness of faculty rating by students where faculty morale is involved.

A Florida study (JC 660 065) investigated the professional effectiveness of retired military personnel in public junior colleges. Subject to the limitations of the investigation, the study found that retired military personnel:

1. Do not differ significantly from career teachers in the estimation of administrators.
2. Function in an "average to above average" fashion in the performance of professional duties.
3. Accept favorably the purposes of the junior college, and in certain junior colleges they accept these purposes much better than do career teachers.
4. Are qualified for a variety of teaching areas, depending on the background and experience of the individual, but these individuals are especially well qualified for the science/mathematics area.
5. Are favorably accepted by students and are considered to be average or above average in comparison with career teachers.
6. Would improve their chances of being employed if they attended graduate school before applying for teaching jobs.

7. Experience very little difficulty in making the transition from military life to academic life.

This investigation found that junior college administrators who are primarily responsible for the employment of teachers would offer the following advice to military personnel contemplating a career in junior college teaching: attend graduate school before applying for a teaching position; apply for teaching rather than administrative positions; deemphasize rank and military background; and visit several junior colleges before making a commitment to the junior college field.

An investigation by the Commission on Instruction of the American Association of Junior Colleges (JC 670 558) sought to answer the following questions: (1) What are the techniques currently used to measure effective teaching, and (2) How could it better be measured? Briefly stated, the methods of evaluation most frequently used were: observation in the classroom; years of experience; number of degrees, student accomplishment on tests, student evaluation, intuition, and a follow-up of junior college graduates. With reference to how to better identify and measure good teaching, observation, student evaluation, follow-up of junior college graduates, and faculty participation in the evaluation process were emphasized.

To assist administrators in their efforts to improve the teaching of junior college English, a California study (JC 660 020) offered the following recommendations:

1. Provide teachers with excellent supervision, departmental leadership, and consultant help.

2. Maintain a library of professional books and teaching aids which are easily available in the departmental office.

3. Plan departmental meetings and workshops devoted to the problems involved in the teaching of English.

4. Encourage teachers to attend local, state, and national meetings devoted to the teaching of English.

5. Plan in-service courses or encourage teachers to enroll in graduate courses related to the courses they teach.

In a national survey based upon interviews with more than 650 junior college personnel (JC 670 130), faculty agreed in varying degree, depending on the local situation, with the following four recommendations for professional growth of junior college teachers:

1. Establish the standard teaching load as 12 hours, with student loads dropped proportionately.

2. Expand guidance and counseling programs on a massive scale, and then improve articulation between faculty and guidance departments.

3. Either raise salaries significantly, so that teachers can buy their own time for further graduate work, attendance at professional meetings, or whatever; or provide enough special funds to travel, study, and the like, so that faculty can take advantage of available opportunities.

4. Educate local boards, district boards, state departments, and state legislatures to some of the realities of the teaching situation so that they can be more realistic when they appropriate money and establish regulations for employment of teachers, salary schedules, and similar things.

Summary

Junior colleges claim the virtue of good teaching, as evidenced by their almost universal stress upon teaching rather than upon research as a goal and by their quest for membership in accrediting agencies whose major focus is upon the improvement of instruction.

Faculty ratings by students have stimulated self-improvement where students' ratings and especially students' criticisms have been given serious consideration by faculty. Students' ratings have tended to favor faculty coming directly from graduate schools and with some background in professional education.

Retired military personnel compare favorably with others as junior college teachers and do especially well in science and mathematics. Attendance at a graduate school enhances their status as applicants for junior college teaching positions.

Classroom observations, student accomplishments, ratings by students, and follow-up studies of graduates have proved to be useful measures of teacher effectiveness. Junior college teachers also stress the importance of supervision and departmental leadership. They believe that attendance at in-service workshops and local and national meetings, reduced teaching loads, and better guidance programs would improve their teaching.

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